

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2026



Title of Report	NEW LOCAL PLAN – POLICIES UPDATE	
Presented by	Tom James Interim Planning Policy Team Manager	
Background Papers	National Planning Policy Framework Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (December 2024) Item 5 Report to Local Plan Committee 8 December 2022 2024 Regulation 18 Proposed Policies for Consultation 2024 Regulation 18 consultation responses	Public Report: Yes Key Decision: No
Financial Implications	The cost of the Local Plan Review is met through existing budgets which are monitored on an ongoing basis.	
	Signed off by the Acting Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The Local Plan must be based on robust and up to date Evidence.	
	Signed off by the Interim Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	No staffing implications are associated with the specific content of this report. Links with the Council’s Priorities are set out at the end of the report.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To agree the policy wording for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy H9: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople • Policy Ec1 – Economic Strategy • New policy on the Long-term Management of Community Assets and Stewardship • Policy H5 – Affordable Housing 	

Recommendations	<p>THAT THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE:</p> <p>(I) AGREES THAT, SUBJECT TO THE FINDINGS OF THE WHOLE PLAN VIABILITY ASSESSMENT, POLICY H9: GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE AS AMENDED AT APPENDIX A(III) OF THIS REPORT IS INCLUDED IN THE REGULATION 19 VERSION OF THE LOCAL PLAN</p> <p>(II) NOTES THE COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF POLICY EC1 – ECONOMIC STRATEGY AS SUMMARISED AT APPENDIX C OF THIS REPORT</p> <p>(III) AGREES THAT POLICY EC1 – ECONOMIC STRATEGY IN APPENDIX C OF THIS REPORT IS INCLUDED IN THE REGULATION 19 VERSION OF THE LOCAL PLAN</p> <p>(IV) AGREES THAT THE PROPOSED POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ASSETS AND STEWARDSHIP AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX D OF THIS REPORT IS INCLUDED IN THE REGULATION 19 VERSION OF THE LOCAL PLAN</p> <p>(V) NOTES THE COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF POLICY H5 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING AS SUMMARISED AT APPENDIX E OF THIS REPORT</p> <p>(VI) AGREES THAT, SUBJECT TO AND INFORMED BY THE FINDINGS OF THE WHOLE PLAN VIABILITY ASSESSMENT, POLICY H5 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT APPENDIX E OF THIS REPORT IS INCLUDED IN THE REGULATION 19 VERSION OF THE LOCAL PLAN</p>
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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the proposed policy wording for a further number of topic areas:

- a) Policy H9: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- b) Policy Ec1 – Economic Strategy
- c) New policy on the Long-term Management of Community Assets and Stewardship
- d) Policy H5 – Affordable Housing

2 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

2.1 The report is structured as follows:

- Section 3 focuses on the policy wording and evidence base update for Policy H9: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- Section 4 deals with Policy Ec1 – Economic Strategy
- Section 5 focuses on a new policy relating to the long-term management of community assets and stewardship to set out an overall approach to how assets arising from new development are managed
- Section 6 is concerned with Policy H5 – Affordable Housing

2.2 The appendices are included separately to enable Members to have access to both the report and the policy wording (set out in the appendices) at the same time. For clarity, the complete list of appendices is:

- **Appendix A** – Policy H9: Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
 - Appendix A(i) - Regulation 18 consultation responses
 - Appendix A(ii) - Planning Inspectorate Advisory Meeting
 - Appendix A(iii) - Revised Policy H9
- **Appendix B** – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment update letter (April 2026)
- **Appendix C** – Proposed wording for Policy Ec1 – Economic Strategy and Regulation 18 stage consultation comments and proposed responses.
- **Appendix D** – Proposed new policy relating to the long-term management of community assets and stewardship
- **Appendix E** – Policy wording for Policy H5 – Affordable Housing and Regulation 18 stage consultation comments and proposed responses.

3 GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

Regulation 18 Consultation

3.1 A draft of Policy H9: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople formed part of the 2024 Regulation 18 consultation. The Regulation 18 consultation document (published January 2024) confirmed:

- The accommodation needs for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople Plots as reported in the North West Leicestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (2022).
- Despite an extensive search, officers had been unable to identify any suitable sites to meet the identified needs of permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches or Travelling Showpeople plots.
- In the context of the 8 December 2022 Local Plan Committee resolution that “*this Council look to include provision of a transit site as a matter of urgency*”, officers were looking for a solution for transit provision.
- That provision of a transit site in North West Leicestershire needed to be balanced against the costs incurred in providing a site, including ongoing

maintenance and the cost of acquiring land if the site is not in the Council's ownership.

3.2 Consultation responses were submitted by four respondents: two parish/town councils, Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council (as the Multi-Agency Traveller Unit, MATU). Some changes to Policy H9 have been incorporated in response to the consultation. The consultation responses are summarised at **Appendix A(i)**.

3.3 Since the end of the consultation:

- The government has published an update to the [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) (December 2024) which amends the definition of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to include those who have ceased travelling permanently.
- Officers discussed Local Plan provision for Gypsies, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople with the Planning Inspectorate as part of a Local Plan advisory meeting (February 2025).
- Opinion Research Services prepared an update to the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment to ensure the evidence base is up to date (April 2026).
- Officers continued to work on identifying a solution for transit provision.

Planning Inspectorate Advisory Meeting

3.4 Officers met with a Planning Inspector as part of a Local Plan advisory meeting on 27 February 2025. The Inspector had read the Reg 18 consultation document in advance of her visit. A summary of the key discussion points and an officer update is at **Appendix A(ii)**.

3.5 The policy has been amended to reflect matters discussed with the Inspector (**Appendix A(iii)**). A topic paper will be prepared for the Regulation 19 consultation that will describe the steps officers have taken to meet to identify site allocations; the Inspector confirmed this and a suitably worded criteria-based policy was essential should the Local Plan seek to rely on a windfall-based approach to meeting Traveller accommodation needs.

Evidence base update

3.6 A letter has been prepared by ORS (**Appendix B**) which reviews and updates the 2022 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

3.7 It concludes that the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches has reduced as shown in **Table 1** (the total need was previously 47 pitches).

Table 1: Updated need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2022-2027	2027-2032	2032-2037	2037-2042	
Need (pitches)	14	6	5	4	29
Potential need (pitches)	1	0	1	0	2
	15	6	6	4	31

3.8 The need for Travelling Showpeople Plots remains the same as in 2022 (26 plots across the plan period).

3.9 As recommended by the Inspector, the policy references the identified need for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and the supporting text for the policy will include the latest figures from ORS (April 2026).

3.10 As no suitable sites have been identified, the Local Plan will deal with the need for permanent accommodation by applying the criteria in Policy H9 to future planning applications.

Transit site

3.11 There are no transit sites in Leicestershire. Evidence from 2017 identified a need in the north-west of the county although no specific requirements were identified for North West Leicestershire. Notwithstanding this, since that time, officers at North West Leicestershire have undertaken extensive work to identify a suitable site. Two potential sites in Council ownership were identified; however, both have since been proposed for alternative uses, meaning a site allocation for transit provision will *not* form part of the Local Plan.

3.12 This represents a risk to the plan. As with permanent sites, officers will set out the work that has been undertaken in trying to identify a transit site, as evidence for the Local Plan Inspector. Officers will also present data on unauthorised encampments in the district, including frequency, duration and location.

3.13 Officers have also suggested looking into negotiated stopping agreements as an alternative to a dedicated transit site; this is something that would require a corporate approach to both establish and administer, involving the Council's legal, property services and community focus teams in addition to planning.

4 POLICY EC1 – ECONOMIC STRATEGY

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires the Local Plan to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth” (paragraph 86a). This can be achieved by including a specific policy in the plan, Policy Ec1 – Economic Strategy.

- 4.2 The [2024 Regulation 18 Proposed Policies for Consultation](#) signalled that the Council would include Policy Ec1 in the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan. Despite the lack of specific policy wording, there was a number of consultation comments about the principle of the policy. These are summarised and responded to in Appendix C.
- 4.3 Proposed wording for Policy Ec1 – Economic Strategy is included in Appendix C. The policy draws together key aspects from elsewhere in the Local Plan which collectively help to support the growth of the district’s economy.

5 LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY ASSETS AND STEWARDSHIP

- 5.1 Management of facilities and assets is key to the long-term success of development. This policy is about making sure that new open spaces, community facilities, and green or blue infrastructure provided through development is properly looked after for the long term.
- 5.2 Long-term stewardship is an approach to delivering and managing places and their assets that ensures new communities are places which enable people and the environment to flourish in perpetuity. Long-term community stewardship of local assets can benefit a range of stakeholders, including the Council, developers and local communities. Councils know that new facilities will be sustainable with well organised management structures supported by consistent revenue streams. Plans or strategies that set out how assets will be managed and funded from the outset (i.e. before they are built) will ensure their long term, affordable management and maintenance.
- 5.3 For major or sensitive developments, the Council will require developers to demonstrate who will manage these spaces, how they will be funded, and how the community will be involved. This could include setting up a dedicated stewardship body with the resources it needs to maintain facilities over time. If the Council is expected to adopt or maintain any facilities, appropriate financial contributions will be required.
- 5.4 The policy is set out in **Appendix D**.

6 POLICY H5 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 6.1 A draft of Policy H5 – Affordable Housing was included in the 2024 Regulation 18 consultation. The draft policy did not specify the amount (percentage) or the tenure of affordable housing to be required; an overall understanding of residential development viability is needed before these matters can be resolved. That work is currently in train by means of the Whole Plan Viability Assessment.
- 6.2 A summary of the consultation comments received in 2024 is set out in **Appendix E**. Many of the comments, and especially those from the development industry, recognised that Whole Plan Viability Assessment is a crucial piece of evidence and that without it, the ability to make definitive comments on the draft policy was limited. Further themes raised in the development industry responses include a request for variation and flexibility in application of affordable housing policy requirements and the observation that the scale of the need for affordable housing could be a driver to increase overall housing requirements.
- 6.3 When the Regulation 18 consultation was prepared, the NPPF contained specific

requirements for affordable home ownership and for First Homes¹. These provisions have been removed from the current NPPF and, as a result, it is recommended that criterion (6) which relates to First Homes is deleted from the policy.

- 6.4 The revised policy is set out in Appendix E. The affordable housing requirements (amount and tenure) will be added to the policy once the Whole Plan Viability Assessment is concluded.

7 NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 Almost all of the Local Plan policies have now been reported to this Committee and the Regulation 19 policy wording has been agreed. Outstanding matters which will be reported as part of the Regulation 19 Plan to 4 June Local Plan Committee include:

- Policy wording for Policy H2 – Housing Commitments
- Introductory policy wording for Policy H3 – Housing Allocations
- Policy H5 – Affordable Housing: detailed requirements, subject to the completion of the Viability Assessment
- Policy H11 - Accessible, Adaptable and Wheelchair User Housing. Whilst this policy has previously been reported, officers will update the committee on the implications of the Housing Mix Update Paper for the policy wording.
- Policy wording for Policy Ec2 – Employment Commitments
- Introductory policy wording for Policy Ec3 – Employment Allocations
- Policy approach to infrastructure in and around M1J24

- 7.2 Note: proposed Policy H1 - Housing Strategy will **not** now be included in the plan. On reflection, it is considered that such a policy would not add anything additional or important to the plan's policy coverage.

¹ Discount market homes exclusively for first time buyers.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing
Policy Considerations:	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the NPPF and other government guidance and requirements.
Safeguarding:	None discernible
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the new Local Plan will be undertaken as part of the Sustainability Appraisal.
Customer Impact:	No issues identified
Economic and Social Impact:	The decision itself will have no specific impact. The new Local Plan as a whole will aim to deliver positive economic and social impacts and these will be recorded through the Sustainability Appraisal.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The decision, of itself, will have no specific impact. The new Local Plan as a whole will aim to deliver positive environmental and climate change impacts and these will be recorded through the Sustainability Appraisal.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	The Regulation 18 Local Plan has been subject to consultation. Consultation on the Draft Plan will be undertaken at Regulation 19 stage.
Risks:	A risk assessment for the Local Plan Review has been prepared and is kept up to date. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, including regular Project Board meetings where risk is reviewed.
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